/83 cont./

231 Animal raising. They raise guinea pigs in their huts, which renders habitation there even more disagreeable. They have several flocks of sheep, pigs, and cows; those of the latter along the shores of the Desaguadero have become amphibious. They spend the entire day in the water and graze on water plants. From afar one would take them for buffalo in some Balkan swamp.

262 252 Cooking. The diet of the Uro is that of all the Indians of the altiplano: potatoes cooked in water, chuño (potato fecula), boiled or roasted meat, maize, broad beans, quinua, cañave, etc. The Uro add to this a dish of their own creation: the juicy pith of the totora. The edible part of this plant is the base of the stalk. It does not need to be prepared in any way.

252 [179] The Uro have preserved a method of cooking which is very old and whose distribution in South America, completely unusual, corresponds perhaps to a very archaic cradle of civilization: this is the subterranean oven, or Polynesian oven. "These ovens, which the Uro call vaxaña, consist of a hole dug in the earth whose depth, equal to the diameter, is about 60 centimeters. The rounded edge juts out at the level of the ground, and the entire interior is plastered with clay. The Uro light a fire inside and put in stones which are more or less flat. When the rocks are incandescent they are withdrawn, with the exception of those at the bottom. On top of them is laid a bed of fish, on which is placed a second bed of stones, then a second bed of fish, and so on until the oven is full. It is then closed with rocks which are covered with rushes. The fish thus cooks by stewing" (Palavecino).

251 They preserve fish by drying it on mats after having /84/ salted it. They do the same with the birds, whose flesh is cut up and exposed to the rays of the sun.

273 They make a beer called xawinskania from cañave seeds (Palavecino).

396 [403] Manufacture of balsas. The most important industrial activity of the Uro is the manufacture of rafts of totora, or balsas, to be provided with which partically all the shore-dwellers on the Titicaca come to them. As these small craft deteriorate rapidly,

5:La Barre E-5 (1937-1938) 1946
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Uru, who, at best, are an inhospitable, apathetic, and hate-filled group which has been condemned and harassed throughout its history.

The culture of the *Uru* is now largely like that of the *Aymara*, with whom they have recently extensively intermarried, but it preserves several interesting archaic features of altiplano culture.

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

Fishing.—The *Uru* depend primarily on fishing (pl. 115, *top*), secondarily on hunting, in the waters and totora reed swamps of Lake Titicaca and the Río Desaguadero. The dry land they own is so restricted that they have little agriculture, although they have some livestock

Fishing by moonlight is much favored. They frequently use a V-shaped weir made of reed bundles thrust into the mud of the swamp bottom, with a removable net at the opening of the V; the fish are driven into the converging fences by agitating the water with a bundle of reeds tied to a pole. The *Uru* also use three- and eight-pointed spears, but lack the bow and arrow. They have several kinds of nets. Large dip nets attached to a frame are handled by one fisherman; the netting is placed over a conical frame, the partially closed base of which is 10 ft. (3 m.) in diameter Another framed net is rectangular, a scoop net with a pole handle. Bottom and dragnets also exist; these are weighted with perforated stones at the bottom, and require a number of persons to drag them behind several balsas. Small fish, salted and toasted, are carried and eaten dry on journeys. Larger varieties are salted, scaled, boned, and stretched out between stones in a slow, smoky fire; thus smoke-dried, they are preserved for periods of scarcity.

Hunting.—Hunting is next in importance to fishing. The river marshes abound in water hens, ducks, geese, loons, herons, various diving birds, and gulls, of which only the loon is not eaten, because of its rank oily flesh. A kind of red duck (pana-soluna) is most frequently hunted. Hunting methods are varied. The *Uru* are skillful with slings, which are woven and braided of varicolored llama and sheep wool. They also use bolas, which have two large wooden floats for balls and a small, grooved, ovoid stone for a handgrip. One use of disguises has been reported. Early in the morning a man conceals himself in a bunch of reeds, slowly approaches the birds which are still stupefied by the cold of the night, then, grabbing them by the feet, quickly kills them by biting the head or twisting the neck. In communal hunts, nets, sometimes hundreds of meters long, are set in slightly curved lines on reed supports. Hunters in balsas make a noisy drive and frighten the birds into the almost invisible nets and dispatch them with clubs. The *Uru* also eat the eggs of aquatic birds, and sun-dry strips of their flesh to make a kind of charqui.

9:La Barre E-4,5 (1938) 1941
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native names for so exiguous a number of scientific varieties. These occur in the species: *O. Cuvieri, O. Pentlandi, O. Humboldti, O. Jussieui, O. Bairdii, O. Ortonnii, O. frontosus, and O. Neveui.* Of the *Trichomycteri* (Aymara *suči, mauri;* Uru *čisi*) these species are present: *T. dispar Tschudi,* and *T. rivulatus.* Other native names for fish, which I have been unable to identify clearly with the scientific classifications are: (Aymará) *qesi-čoqa, qesintxu, kuri-mauri, umantú, karači;* (Uru) *teri, čis, čaki, okʷulu, čalkiri,* and *wakʷlali* —whence it appears that the natives give separate names to the male and female of the same species.

Fish are preserved and prepared in several ways. The smaller kinds (*ispi, sačala, učkerčula*), salted and toasted, are carried and eaten dry on journeys. The larger varieties (*suči, mauri, čisi*) are salted, scaled, boned, and stretched out between stones in a slow, smoky fire, and thus smoke-dried are preserved for periods of scarcity, according to Posnansky. But what appears to be the same process, described by Palavecino, is evidently a method of *cooking:*

> These ovens, which the Uru call *sazaño*, consist in a hole dug in the soil, whose depth, equal to the diameter, is about 60 cm. The rounded edge is raised at the surface of the ground, and the entire interior is plastered with clay. The Uru light a fire in it and introduce more or less flat stones. When the stones are incandescent, they take them out, all except those on the bottom. They lay on these a layer of fish, on which is placed a second bed of stones, then a layer of fish, and so on until the oven is full. It is closed with stones, and covered with reeds. The fish is thus cooked by steaming.

Métraux notes that this is a very ancient type of earth oven in South America.

Hunting is almost as important to the Uru as fishing, neither of which is basic in Chipaya economy. The river marshes abound with birds of many kinds: waterhens (*wesla, čokxa*), ducks (*soχna*), geese (*wačata*), loons (*pače*), herons (*ačičí*), various diving birds and gulls; a large unidentified black bird they call *čiwanku* or *čičinksa.* Other unidentified birds are *čalita, kalwwaina* (*waina* is Aymará for "youth, young man"), *alowa, čowani.* Of these aquatic birds, only the "bobo" (*pače*) is not hunted or eaten, because of its rank, oily flesh. Most frequently hunted is a kind of red duck called *p'anosoχna.*

The Uru hunt birds by several methods. Posnansky says men hunting alone in the early morning disguise themselves in bunches of reeds, slowly approach the birds who are still stupefied by the cold of the night, then, grabbing them by the feet, they quickly kill the birds by biting the head or twisting the neck. The Uru are able users of slingshots woven or braided of varicolored llama-wools, and they also use *bolas,* made with two large

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wooden balls and a small grooved, ovoid stone for the handgrip.[8] They have no firearms, nor have they ever possessed them apparently. The bow and arrow is likewise lacking; spears are used only in obtaining fish.

An interesting group-hunt at determined periods employs both men and sometimes women. They stretch in selected sites extensive nets, sometimes hundreds of meters long, for birds whose flight is near the surface of the water; the nets are extended below the surface also, to prevent the escape of diving birds. They anchor the nets to faggots or clumps of *totora* set in slightly curved lines. Then hunters in their *balsas* make much noise and frighten the birds into the almost invisible nets, where they can despatch them with clubs (*yuhrua*), and kill with their *bolas* those which attempt to escape. Uru also eat the eggs (*hiñi*) of aquatic birds. The flesh of the birds is cut into strips, hung in the sun, and dried into a kind of *charqui* ("jerky," from the Aymará *tarki*).

The Uru do little hunting of land animals. Vicuñas (*Auchenia vicuña; tahola*, a word obviously related to Aymará *hola*, llama) are extremely scarce or absent, as are also guanacos. It is said, however, that in winters of very extreme cold[9] small groups of vicuñas may stray down into the Desaguadero region. The head male of the herd is lassoed, and the others of the herd, immobilized by the cold, are speedily killed. The small rodents of the pampas, like the viscacha (*ahilas*), apparently are not hunted by the Uru. Most of the birds they kill, like a good proportion of the fish they catch, they take to the villages to trade for other food and necessary articles, since these are their sole source of revenue, beyond their *balsa*-making.

Material Culture. The stalks of the giant reed *totora* (a *Cyperaceous* plant, *Scirpus totora*) are surely the most important substance in Uru material culture: of them they make fish-weirs, supports for bird-nests, reed-mats, floor- and sitting-mats, rafters, doors, *balsa*-boats and their sails; and the few cattle they have browse upon the roots of the *totora* as well. Unless *balsas* are frequently removed from the water and thoroughly dried, they last scarcely longer than a year or two before rotting. The Uru *balsa*-builders are famous and supply many of their Aymára neighbors with them in the southwestern region of Lake Titicaca. The reeds must first be cut with

[8] An Uru bola from the Desaguadero is now in the possession of Dr Frank G. Speck, in his private collection at the University of Pennsylvania.

[9] The Aymára have a phrase to designate extreme cold or "bone-numbery" weather: *q'ala* ("stone"), *hahaya* ("to split"), *wari* (vicuña), *q'aruya* ("makes cry"), i.e. weather cold enough to split stones and make the fluffy-coated vicuña scream. The Aymára schoolboys in La Paz—according to my "chola" interpreter, the late Manuela Alvarado, who was one of them—have made a very effective football ("futbol") yell of this familiar phrase: *q'ala hahaya wari q'aruya, ura ura!*